

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

SAJ-01 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /135 W

----- 062320

R 240957Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8244

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 15338

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: GW, PINT

SUBJECT: THE SAD STATE OF THE GERMAN CHANCELLERY

1. SUMMARY: SEVERAL NEWS COMMENTARIES IN RECENT WEEKS ABOUT THE LACK OF LEADERSHIP FROM THE CHANCELLOR HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED IN LARGE PART BY CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD IN THE LAST WEEK WITH SOURCES IN AND AROUND THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE. IN SUM, THE CHANCELLERY IS REPORTEDLY POORLY RUN, AND THE CHANCELLOR IS FEELING EVER MORE ADRIFT IN TRYING TO COME TO GRIPS WITH PROBLEMS. PART OF THE DIFFICULTY PROBABLY STEMS FROM THE NATURE OF THE CHANCELLOR, HIMSELF, BUT PERHAPS JUST AS MUCH FROM THE INEFFICIENT ORGANIZATION AND BUREAUCRATIC IN-FIGHTING GOING ON IN THE CHANCELLERY. NO  
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IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION IS IN SIGHT. END SUMMARY.

2. MUR SOURCES HAVE TOLD US OF THE CONFLICTS AND DIS-  
PUTES WHICH PLAGUE THE CHANCELLOR'S INNER CIRCLE.  
HIS KEY ADVISERS TEND, ALMOST TO A MAN, TO FOCUS ON  
FOREIGN AND INNER-GERMAN POLICIES. FEW ARE CONCERNED  
WITH DOMESTIC ISSUES. UNFORTUNATELY, FOREIGN AND  
INNER-GERMAN POLITICS REQUIRE LESS AND LESS TIME OF  
THOSE IN THE CHANCELLERY, NOT LEAST BECAUSE FOREIGN  
MINISTER SCHEEL AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAVE TAKEN EFFEC-  
TIVE HOLD IN THAT AREA. THE FEW CRUMBS THAT ARE LEFT,  
I.E. DEALING BILATERALLY WITH THE GDR, ARE NOT NEARLY  
ENOUGH TO GO ROUND THE HUNGRY GENTLEMEN IN THE CHAN-  
CELLERY, WITH THE RESULT THAT FALLINGS-OUT AND BITTER  
RESENTMENTS HAVE BECOME THE NORM.

3. ACCORDING TO ONE CONTACT, SPD PARLIAMENTARY LEADER  
HERBERT WEHNER RECOGNIZES THE PROBLEM VERY CLEARLY.  
HE KNOWS THAT THE CHANCELLOR IS PROVIDING LITTLE LEADER-  
SHIP TO THE SPD OR TO THE REST OF THE FEDERAL GOVERN-  
MENT. BRANDT AND HIS INNER CIRCLE ARE CONTENT TO SIT  
AROUND AT THE END OF THE DAY OVER COGNAC AND PHILOSO-  
PHIZE ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE. BUT THERE IS NOBODY,  
APART FROM A FEW PARTY WORKHORSES (INCLUDING WEHNER,  
IN OUR SOURCE'S OPINION) WILLING TO GO OUT AND GET  
THEIR HANDS DIRTY DEALING WITH THE PARTY AT THE WORK-  
ING LEVEL, WITH THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS, OR WITH THE  
PRESSING DOMESTIC ISSUES NOW CONFRONTING THE SPD.  
LASTLY, AND THIS IS REPORTEDLY MOST GALLING TO WEHNER  
AND OTHER TOP-LEVEL PARTY LEADERS, NO SENIOR SPD  
LEADERS ARE PREPARED TO ARGUE FORCEFULLY WITH THE FDP  
ABOUT FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC ISSUES. THE CHANCELLERY IS  
CHARGED WITH BEING WILLING, FOR THE SAKE OF PRESERVING  
THE COALITION, TO ACCEPT PRACTICALLY ANY MEASURES PUSHED  
BY THE FDP.

4. IT IS THIS SEEMINGLY AIMLESS APPROACH TO LEADER-  
SHIP THAT HAS SO OFFENDED TOP SPD FIGURES IN RECENT  
WEEKS AND THAT HAS LED TO THE OUTSPOKEN CRITICISMS OF  
BRANDT PERSONALLY. ACCORDING TO ONE CONTACT WORKING  
IN THE CHANCELLERY, BRANDT IS DEEPLY UNHAPPY OVER THESE  
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CHARGES AND IS SULKING IN HIS OFFICE. HE IS FINDING  
IT DIFFICULT TO BE CIVIL TO WEHNER AND OTHERS AND FEELS  
THAT HIS SPD COHORTS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE BURDENS OF  
KEEPING THE COALITION FUNCTIONING SMOOTHLY. IT IS  
TRUE, APPARENTLY, THAT SOME OF BRANDT'S  
CRITICS (E.G. WEHNER) AND SOME IN HIS INNER CIRCLE AS  
WELL (E.G. BAHR) HAVE A CONTEMPTUOUS APPROACH TO SCHEEL  
AND THE FDP, AND THIS HAS NOT EASED BRANDT'S LIFE.

HOWEVER, IT IS INTERESTING THAT BRANDT FEELS HE HAS TO  
RISE ABOVE HIS PARTY AND HIS FORMERLY CLOSE FRIENDS TO  
MAKE PEACE WITH SCHEEL, WITH WHOM BRANDT MAINTAINS CLOSE  
AND HARMONIOUS WORKING RELATIONS.

5. OUR SOURCES DO NOT FORESEE ANY GREAT CHANGES IN THE  
FUNCTIONING OF THE CHANCELLERY RESULTING FROM THESE

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 15338

PUBLIC CRITICISMS OF RECENT WEEKS. BRANDT'S UNAGGRES-  
SIVE STYLE OF LEADERSHIP WILL NOT PRODUCE A POUNDING  
OF THE TABLE, EXCEPT IN VERY CLOSED CIRCLES OF FRIENDS  
WHERE THE ACTION WILL HAVE NO MEANING. HIS RELATIONS  
WITH WEHNER WILL NOT IMPROVE MARKEDLY, ALTHOUGH THE  
TWO WILL KEEP SOME SEMBLANCE OF PEACE FOR THE PARTY'S

SAKE. NO CHANCELLERY OFFICIAL WILL TAKE OVER EHMKE'S FORMER ROLE AS WEHNER'S HANDHOLOER AND SAFETY VALUE FOR THE OLD WARHORSE'S COMPLAINTS. THE ONLY MAN IN THE CHANCELLERY NOW CONCENTRATING ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, STATE SECRETARY RAVENS, WILL CONTINUE TO BE OVERWORKED AND UNAPPRECIATED. AND THOSE MORE ATTRACTED TO FOREIGN AND INNER-GERMAN POLICY (BAHR, GRABERT, GAUS, AND HARPRECHT) WILL CONTINUE TO DIVIDE UP A VERY SMALL PIE.

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6. BAHR, IN PARTICULAR, MAY GROW UNHAPPY UNDER THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT FOR HE IS NOW VASTLY UNDER-EMPLOYED. BUT HE KNOWS THERE IS LITTLE ROOM FOR MANEUVER AT PRESENT, ESPECIALLY WITH THE OPPOSITION EVER READY TO USE HIM AS THEIR TARGET FOR ATTACKING THE GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY GENERALLY AND INNER-GERMAN POLICY IN PARTICULAR. HE WAS A PRINCIPAL OBJECT OF ATTACK BY CDU PARLIAMENTARY LEADER CARSTENS IN THE RECENT FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE. BOTH HE AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, GRABERT ARE SOURCES OF DEEP SUSPICION FROM THE OPPOSITION, BUT ALSO FROM THE FDP AND FROM THE MORE CONSERVATIVE WING OF THE SPD. BOTH MEN WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO SPEND MUCH OF THEIR TIME PROTECTING THEIR FLANKS AND THUS CONTRIBUTING EVEN FURTHER TO THE CHANCELLERY'S GENERAL INEFFICIENT MANNER OF OPERATION.

7. BRANDT HIMSELF IS AWARE OF THE LACK OF PROPER COMMUNICATION AND ISSUE-HANDLING. HE HAS REPORTEDLY COMPLAINED ABOUT BEING FOREVER SURPRISED BY CONFLICTING VIEWS COMING UP IN CABINET MEETINGS WHEN HE HAD BEEN TOLD THAT MATTERS HAD BEEN RESOLVED PREVIOUSLY. MUCH OF THIS PROBLEM LIES AT GRABERT'S DOOR, BUT HE IS NOT KNOWN FOR HIS QUALITIES AS A SYNTHESIZER OR SMOOTHER OF RUFFLED FEELINGS. PART OF THE PROBLEM ALSO STEMS FROM THE PRIMA DONNAS IN THE GOVERNMENT OR PARTY (E.G. SCHMIDT, WEHNER, EPPLER, WISCHNEWSKI) WHO, WITHOUT STRONG LEADERSHIP, WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO MOLD INTO A TEAM IN ANY EVENT. AND, FINALLY, A PART OF THE PROBLEM COMES FROM BRANDT'S UNWILLINGNESS TO HEAR ABOUT DIFFICULT PROBLEMS AND, CONSEQUENTLY, FROM HIS STAFF'S UNWILLINGNESS TO GIVE HIM BAD NEWS. THIS STRANGE SECLUSION IN THE CHANCELLERY, AS ONE COMMENTATOR HAS DESCRIBED THE ATMOSPHERE, HAS LED TO UNPLEASANT TRUTHS BEING SERVED UP IN THE PALAIS SCHAUMBURG IN ONLY WELL-MEASURED (AND SMALL) QUANTITIES.

8. COMMENT: THE ABOVE VIEWS OF THE CHANCELLERY OPERATION COME FROM RELIABLE SOURCES REASONABLY WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD THE BRANDT GOVERNMENT. THE COMMENTS

THEY HAVE MADE, OBVIOUSLY SUBJECTIVE, ARE NONETHELESS  
REPORTED FULLY BECAUSE THEIR REMARKS SEEM TO US TO  
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REFLECT FAIRLY ACCURATELY THE ORGANIZATIONAL AND PER-  
SONNEL PROBLEMS THAT THE CHANCELLOR IS NOW FACING AND  
WILL CONTINUE TO FACE IN THE FUTURE.  
HILLENBRAND

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## Message Attributes

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